



**TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
DIVISION OF FORESTRY
ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
BOX 40627, MELROSE STATION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37204**

July 01, 2006

Dear Forest Legacy Ranking Committee, Conservation Partners, Forest Landowners, and others:

It is time for reviewing and ranking tracts to be considered for funding under the Forest Legacy Program for FY – 2008. The Forest Legacy Committee of the State Forest Stewardship Committee will convene on Tuesday, September 12, 2006 @ 10 AM at the Ellington Agricultural Center to review and rank tracts for which funding is being sought. Forest Legacy Areas identified in the 1999 AON continue to be valid for 2008 program.

Those wishing to have tracts considered for funding must have their submissions to Paul Deizman at the above address by 4:30 PM eastern time, Friday, September 1, 2006. The submission packet can and should include information that the submitter feels qualifies the tract for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program (see attached documents). Your information will be copied and sent to the members of the review committee, but please note that we can only copy 8 ½ x 11, black and white papers. Please include 15 copies of articles, brochures, color maps, etc. that we will not be able to copy at our facility. A tract owner or representative may show up for this meeting with project in hand if you will notify us in advance (prior to COB September 1), provide us the owner contact information to verify the project and intent, and bring 15 complete copies of the submission materials, letters and forms.

It has been determined that we must require in your packet a letter of intent to me or the state committee from the respective landowner before the review committee will consider their tract. A sample is attached. A letter of intent is not a commitment, but it does imply that the landowner is familiar with the program and its objectives, and as such intends to participate in the program. We need contact information of the willing seller, including phone number, with each letter of intent. To that end we will be calling interested landowners before September 12th to discuss the program with them.

For those submitting more than one tract for funding consideration, we ask that you prioritize them in a cover letter in the packet of information you send to me. Of special interest to you is the attached RANKING SHEET the review committee will be using as a guide when ranking the submissions. Although not the final determinant, the ranking sheet will be an important aid to the committee when making their decisions and recommendations to the State Forester.

In the attachments, you will find a map showing Tennessee's fourteen (14) Forest Legacy Areas. For a tract to be considered for funding, it must lie in or be contiguous with, one of these fourteen areas. Also included is grading and ranking criteria and the actual ranking sheet to be used. Please be advised that (under separate cover and in conjunction with public announcement) we will be approving and posting changes in the Forest Legacy Areas through a new Assessment of Needs for TN. Please plan ahead for FY-2009 knowing that upcoming changes will affect eligibility of tracts to be considered for funding. The final approval of new FLAs and the new maps will be available July 2007.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions @ (615)837-5437 or email of paul.deizman@state.tn.us.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Deizman
Forest Legacy Program Manager

CHECKLIST

With your FLP submission, include at least as much of the following as possible:

- ____ Name(s), address(es), telephone, and e-mail address of the owners of the property
- ____ Copy of large scale map indicating location of property
- ____ Aerial photo, preferably a digitized map showing FLP acreage boundaries
- ____ List of existing permanent improvements on the tract; house, barns, ponds
- ____ Map identifying any dumps or waste disposal sites on the property
- ____ Copy of Forest Stewardship Plan or Forest Management Plan (if available) (required to participate in FLP).
- ____ Estimate of the number of acres to be included in FLP
- ____ Proximity to other FL tracts and government holdings
- ____ Which of the FLP objectives does this tract address
- ____ What are the landowner's major forest objectives
- ____ Threat to development
- ____ Landowner's Letter of Intent (required)
- ____ Estimated market value (in dollars) of property or tract.

FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

PROJECT SCORING GUIDANCE

(June 21, 2006)

Introduction:

This document provides guidance to the National Review Panel on how to score individual Forest Legacy Program (FLP) projects, including additional clarification on the core national criteria, project readiness and other evaluation considerations used in this process. The outcome from the National Review Panel will be a ranked and prioritized list of FLP projects for submission to the Office of Management and Budget for consideration in the President's Budget. Its objectives are to:

- Provide a clear and defensible ranking process that can be articulated easily to program participants and partners; and
- Ensure fair, equitable and thorough review of all projects by the National Panel

National Project Selection:

Region/Area/IITF Role:

- Work with States to produce highly competitive FLP projects
- Work with States to produce projects that are "Ready"
- Work with States to assure that all pertinent project information is in FLIS
- Learn and understand project details
- Assure that projects meet State AON objectives
- Confirm that projects have been reviewed and evaluated by the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee
- Assure that projects comply with June 30, 2003 FLP Implementation Guidelines
- Work with States to advance top projects to the national selection process

Washington Office Role:

- Work with regions/area/IITF to produce highly competitive FLP submissions
- Ensure that project selections meet congressional direction
- Ensure that project selections meet national program goals

National Review Panel Role:

- Score projects using the national core criteria (Importance, Threatened, and Strategic)
- Apply "Readiness" criteria and organize projects on that criteria
- Develop a National List of ranked projects

National Core Criteria:

Importance – The environmental, social, and economic public benefits gained from the protection and management of the property. More points will be given to projects that demonstrate multiple public benefits at the national or multi-state scale. This criterion reflects the ecological assets and the economic and social values conserved by the project and the scale of people's interest in its protection. It is meant to assess the attributes to be conserved and who is receiving those benefits.

- Outstanding/Exceptional value – 30 points – The project's attributes are of national or multi-state interest;
- Very Good – 20 points – The project's attributes are of state interest;
- Medium / Average – 10 points – The project's attributes are of local interest; or
- Low – 0 points – The project's attributes are unclear or unspecified.

For examples of outstanding projects, please refer to the briefing sheets, in the Forest Legacy Information System (FLIS), for projects that ranked high on the 2007 President's budget request.

Attributes to consider:

Specified in FLP Authorization and FLP Strategic Direction

Forestry – Landowner demonstrates sound forest management and/or contributes to the resource-based economy for a community or region. (Strategic Direction Goal 2.3)

Threatened or Endangered Species Habitat – The site has known individuals and/or habitat for federally designated rare, threatened or endangered plants and animals. In most cases, federally listed species will be given more consideration than state-only listed species. (Strategic Direction Goal 2.3)

Fish, Wildlife, Plants, and Unique Forest Communities– The site contains unique forest communities and/or important fish or wildlife habitat as specified by a wildlife conservation plan or strategy. (Strategic Direction Goal 2.3)

Water Supply Protection – Contiguous riparian area, forested wetlands, shorelines, river systems, sensitive watershed lands, buffer to public drinking water supply or an aquifer recharge area. (Strategic Direction Goal 2.1)

Public Access– The property has full or limited access, and may include specific use restrictions. (Strategic Direction Goal 2.3)

Specified in FLP Authorization

Scenic – The site is located within a viewshed of a formally designated scenic feature or area (such as trail, river, or highway)

Historic/Cultural – Formally documented cultural or historical features are located on site

Threatened - This criterion estimates the likelihood for conversion and considers the following:

- The degree of legal protections that currently exists on the property (e.g. current zoning or existing easements) and if these protections remove the threat of conversion.
- Landowners circumstances (e.g. good land steward interested in conserving land, property held in an estate, aging landowner and future use of property by heirs is uncertain, property is up for sale or has a sale pending, landowner has received purchase offers, etc.)
- Adjacent land use changes (rate of development growth and conversion, rate of population growth, rate of change in ownership, etc).

Likelihood of conversion to non-forest uses.

- Imminent/Likely – 30 points [Circumstances indicate conversion may occur soon or in the somewhat distant future: land has a subdivision plan, landowner has received offers from developers, landowner has sold off subdivisions of the property, land is located in a rapidly developing area, landowners are aged or nearby comparable land has been recently sold for development.]
- Possible – 15 points [Circumstances indicate conversion could occur within 10 years: Land is in an attractive location for development such as waterfront or an outdoor recreation area.]
- Unlikely any time soon (beyond 10 years) – 0 points

If property has been acquired by a third party at the request of the state, threatened will be evaluated based on the situation prior to the third party acquisition. Additional consideration

will be given to projects that will prohibit any additional structures or subdivision of the property.

Strategic - The project fits within a larger conservation plan, strategy, or initiative as designated by either a government or non-governmental entity and is strategically linked to enhance previous conservation investments (either FLP or other investments). This considers reflects the project's relevance or relationship to conservation efforts on a broader perspective. (FLP Strategic Direction 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3)

- 30 points- A key property in a formally developed national or multi-state conservation effort.
- 20 points- A key property in a formally developed state plan or focused protection strategy.
- 10 points- Will lead to additional conservation action locally.
- 0 points- It is an isolated tract with no known connection at this time.

A map helps illustrate the strategic components of the property.

Additional Considerations

1. Where did the State rank the project?
2. What has been the performance of the State program? What is the average time for a state to close projects?
3. What is its current state project backlog and capacity?
4. What is the cost share of the project? Does it provide good leverage? When will it be made toward the project?
5. Was the project funded in a prior year?
6. Is this the first time the state has competed for a project?
7. Project Readiness- the degree of due diligence applied and the certainty of a successful FLP project. Credit will only be given to those items completed, not anticipated completion.
 - Level 0 – 0 items completed
 - Level 1 – 1 items completed
 - Level 2 – 2 items completed
 - Level 3 – 3 item completed
 - Level 4 – 4 items completed
 - Level 5 – 5 items completed

To demonstrate project readiness, completed items need to be specified (including completion date) in FLIS:

- Documented information to support cost estimate, such as completed market analysis or preliminary appraisal.
- Landowner and easement holder has agreed to easement or fee acquisition conditions.
- Cost Share commitment from a specified source.
- Signed option or purchase and sales agreement held by the state or at the request of the state. **OR** At the request of the State, conservation easement or fee title held by a third party.
- Completed title search.
- Completed stewardship plan or multi-resource management plan.

TN FOREST LEGACY PROJECTS POINTS TO CONSIDER

The objectives of the Forest Legacy Program are to:

- Prevent conversions of forestlands to other uses.
- Preserve and protect fish and wildlife habitats, rare plants and animals, and biological diversity.
- Preserve and protect riparian habitats.
- Preserve and protect water quality, fisheries, and water supplies.
- Preserve and protect natural beauty.
- Preserve and protect forest-based recreation opportunities.
- Preserve forestlands for current and future timber production and regeneration.

FLP parcels that abut government holdings (Federal, State, County) are weighted heavily. FLP parcels that are contiguous with other FLP tracts, government holdings, etc. that help to form a forest continuum are also given considerable funding weight.

Larger tracts are favored.

Conservation Easements are favored over Fee Simple purchases.

Tracts containing T&E species are favored.

PLEASE SEE the USFS PROJECT SCORING INFORMATION above:

SUGGESTED FORM LETTER OF INTENT

Name and Address of Participant

Re: **LETTER OF INTENT**

Very brief statement of your intended participation.

*(Example: Regarding 235 acres of Forest Land I own
in Jones County, TN)*

Mr. Paul M. Deizman
Forest Legacy Program Manager
State of Tennessee
P. O. Box 40627, Melrose Station
Nashville, TN 37204

Dear Legacy Program Manager or Mr. Deizman or Paul,

This letter is to state my intentions to proceed forward with regard to (donating my land, fee simple - donating a conservation easement - selling a conservation easement) to Tennessee's Forest Legacy Program subject to approval of the FLP and the US Forest Service.

I understand that a Forest Stewardship Plan, baseline survey, a survey and possibly an appraisal must be established for my property, at no cost to me, and that the persons who perform this work will advise me in advance of their plans to do so.

Please note that this letter is intended only to set out in general terms my intentions to participate in the program. It is not intended to obligate me to make a donation nor is it a binding contract with regard to any transaction and should not be included by anyone as such a contract. While I fully intend to continue with the process should by tract be accepted for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program, I remain free to stop the process at any time I choose to do so.

Sincerely,

STATE OF TENNESSEE FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

RANKING SHEET

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Abuts Protected Land, including Federal, State, City, County, Private non-profit conservation organizations and private conservation easements.

In-holding surrounded by "protected land"	10 pts	
Adjoining or abutting "protected land"	8 pts	
Within one to five miles of "protected land"	4 pts	

Is a permanent Conservation Easement proposal (yes=4 pts)

Threat of Conversion

Stops Current Development or Stops Imminent Development (0 -12 pts)

Group Rank : _____ xxxx _____

Compliments A Federal Interest

Including Federal investments and past Federal assistance efforts: Conservation Reserve Program land is part of the project, Federal and State clean water goals are met or furthered, Federally listed endangered or threatened species habitat is protected. Interstate waterway or water body is protected, part of a federally recognized area or initiative

(0 to 4 pts)

Environmental, ecological, economical and social values

Riparian (1 pt) Includes perennial waterway or shoreline

Drinking Water Concerns – within regional drinking water

aquifer – within one mile of a public water supply

lake – parcel drains into a public water supply lake (1 pt)

Public Recreation – Open access to public (2 pts)

Limited access to public (1 pt)

Scenic - if frontage on a designated scenic route or is part of an important scenic view (2pt)

Threatened or Endangered Species – (2 pts) if parcel supports

Federally listed threatened or endangered species

(1 pt) is suitable habitat exists and will be sustained for a threatened or endangered species

Cultural and Historic for a parcel containing a State

designated historical site (1 pt)

Parcel has been well managed and maintained as evidenced by

a submitted narrative. (1 pt)

Contributes to traditional forest uses as explained in the AON as

justified by a narrative (1 pt)

Acreage

0 to 250 acres	(1 pt)	
250 - 1000 acres	(2 pts)	
1000 - 5000 acres	(3 pts)	
5000 +	(4 pts)	

Support From Other Entities

A brief statement addressing organizations and groups supporting this tract for inclusion in the FLP (1 to 3 pts)

(1 pt/ per group or organization)

Readiness

If tract has recent appraisal or qualified estimated or FMV
As part of proposal (4 pts.)

TOTAL _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER'S SUMMARY SHEET

FOREST LEGACY AREA

TRACT NAME

Name

Address

TRANSACTION TYPE
(circle one)

Fee Simple Donation
Easement Donation
Fee Simple Purchase
Easement Purchase

ACRES

SCORE

NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.